

But atte laste of Tarquiny she hem tolde,
This reful cas, and al this thing horrible.
The wo to tellen hit were impossible,
That she and alle her frendes made atones.
Al hadde folkes hertes been of stonys,
Hit mighte have makid hem upon her rewe,
Her herte was so wyfly and so trewe.
She seide, that, for her gilt ne for her blame,
Her husbond sholde nat have the foule name,
That wolde she nat suffre, by no wey.
And they answerden alle, upon hir fey,
That they foryeve hit her, for hit was right;
Hit was no gilt, hit lay nat in her might;
And seiden her ensamples many con.
But al for noght; for thus she seide anon:
Be as be may, quod she, of forgyving,
I wol nat have no forgyft for nothing.
But prively she caughte forth a knyf,
And therwithal she rafte herself her lyf;
And as she fel adoun, she caste her look,
And of her clothes yit she hede took;
For in her falling yit she hadde care
Lest that her feet or swiche thing lay bare;
So wel she loved clennesse and tek trouthe.
Of her had al the toun of Rome routhe.

And Brutus by her chaste blode hath swore
That Tarquin sholde ybanisht be therfore,
And al his kin; and let the peple calle,
And openly the tale he tolde hem alle,
And openly let carie her on a bere
Through al the toun, that men may see & here
The horrible deed of her oppressioun.
Ne never was ther king in Rome toun
Sin thilke day; and she was holden there
A seint, and ever her day yhatwed dere
As in hir lawe: and thus endeth Lucesse,
The noble wyf, as Titus bereth witnesse.
TELL hit, for she was of love so trewe
And for the stable herte, sad and kinde,
That in these women men may alday finde;
Ther as they caste hir herte, ther hit dwelleth,
For wel I wot, that Crist himselfe telleth,
That in Israel, as wyd as is the lond,
That so gret feith in al the lond he ne fond
As in a woman; and this is no lye.
And as of men, toketh which tyrannye
They doon alday; assay hem who so liste,
The trewest is ful brotel for to triste.
Explicit Legenda Lucrecie Rome martiris.

INCIPIT LEGENDA ADRIANE DE ATHENES

LUGE INFERNAL, MINOS,
OF CRETE KING,
NOW COMETH THY LOT,
NOW COMESTOW ON THE
RING;
NAT FOR THY SAKE ONLY
WRYTE I THIS STORIE,
BUT FOR TO CLEPE A-
GEIN UNTO MEMORIE
OF THESEUS THE GRETE
UNTOU THE OF LOVE;
FOR WHICH THE GODDES
OF THE HEVEN ABOVE
BEN WROTHE, AND
WRECHE HAN TAKE FOR
THY SINNE.
BE REED FOR SHAME!
NOW I THY LYF BE-
GINNE.

MINOS, that was the mighty king of
Crete,
That hadde an hundred citees
stronge and grete,
To scole hath sent his sone Androgeus,
To Athenes; of the whiche hit happened thus,
That he was slayn, lerning philosophye,
Right in that citee, nat but for envye.

The grete Minos, of the whiche I speke,
His sones deeth is comen for to wreke;
Alcathoe he bisegeth harde and longe.
But natheles the walles be so stronge,
And Nisus, that was king of that citee,
So chivalrous, that litel dredeth he;
Of Minos or his ost took he no cure,

Til on a day befel an aventure,
That Nisus doghter stood upon the wal,
And of the sege saw the maner al.
So happed hit, that, at a scarmishing,
She caste her herte upon Minos the king,
For his beautee and for his chivalrye,
So sore, that she wende for to dye.
And, shortly of this proces for to pace,
She made Minos winnen thilke place,
So that the citee was al at his wille,
To saven whom him list, or elles spille;
But wikkedly he quitte her kindenesse,
And let her drenche in sorowe and distresse
Nere that the goddes hadde of her pite;
But that tale were to long as now for me.

ATHENES wan this king Minos also,
And Alcathoe and other tounes mo;
And this theeffect, that Minos hath so
driven
hem of Athenes, that they mote him given
fro yere to yere her owne children dere
for to be slayn, as ye shul after here.

THIS Minos hath a monstre, a wikked
beste,
That was so cruel that, without areste,
Whan that a man was broght in his presence,
He wolde him ete, ther helpeth no defence.
And every thridde yeer, withouten doute,
They casten lot, and, as hit com aboute
On riche, on pore, he moste his sone take,
And of his child he moste present make
Unto Minos, to save him or to spille,
Or lete his beste devour him at his wille.
And this hath Minos don, right in despyt;
To wreke his sone was set al his delyt.



And maken hem of Athenes his thral
fro yere to yere, whyl that he liven shal;
And boon he sailleth whan this toun is wonne.
This wikked custom is so longe yronne
Til that of Athenes king Egeus
Mot sende his owne sone, Theseus,
Sith that the lot is fallen him upon,
To be devoured, for grace is ther non.
And forth is lad this woful yonge knight
Unto the court of king Minos ful right,
And in a prison, fettered, cast is he
Til thilke tyme he sholde yfreten be.

THAT art a kinges sone, and damp-
ned thus.
Me thinketh this, that thou were depe yholde
To whom that saved thee fro cares colde!
And now, if any woman helpe thee,
Weloughtestow her servant for to be,
And been hir trewe lover yeer by yeer!
But now to come ageyn to my matere.

THE tour, ther as this Theseus is throwe
Down in the botom derke & wonder lowe,
Was joyning in the walle to a foreyne;
And hit was longing to the doghtren tweyne
Of king Minos, that in hir chambres grete
Dwellen above, toward the maister strete,
In mochel mirthe, in joye and in solas.

Not I nat how, hit happed ther, per cas,
As Theseus compleyned him by nighte,
The kinges doghter, Adrian that highte,
And eek her suster Phedra, herden al
his compleyning, as they stode on the wal
And lokeden upon the brighte mone;
Hem leste nat to go to bedde sone.
And of his wo they had compassioun;
A kinges sone to ben in swich prisoun
And be devoured, thoughte hem gret pitee.

ADRIAN spak to her suster free,
And seyde: Phedra, leve suster dere,
This woful lordes sone may ye nat here,
How pitously compleyneth he his kin,
And eek his pore estat that he is in,
And gylteles? now certes, hit is routhe!
And if ye wol assenten, by my trouthe,
He shal be holpen, how so that we do!

PHEDRA answerde: Ywis, me is as wo
for him as ever I was for any man;
And, to his help, the beste reed I can
Is that we doon the gayler prively
To come, and speke with us hastily,
And doon this woful man with him to come.
for if he may this monstre overcome,
Than were he quit; ther is noon other bote.
Lat us wel taste him at his herte rote,
That, if so be that he a wepen have,